pean Ambassadors, representing Germany, Belgium, Greece and the European Community visited Jammiu and Kashmir and discussed the Kashmir issue and its possible solutions with militant leaders of the so called All Party Hurryat Conference and JKLF, besides Government officials;

(b) how the visits and discussions were conceived, planned and organised and what was Government's hand therein; and

(c) what was the outcome thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHEED) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Government had made an offer to resident Heads of Missions in New Delhi to organise a visit to Jammu and Kashmir. It was in pursuance of this offer that the visit of the Heads of Missions from Greece, Belgium, Germany and the European Union was organised from Feb 7 to 11, 1994. Government arranged the logistics. A programme of briefings and local visits was drawn up in consultation with the State authorities. The Heads of Missions utilised the visit to also meet a wide cross section of people in the State.

(c) The Heads of Missions were glad that the visit had been organised and appreciated India's policy of transparency. They were able to see at first hand the effect of terrorism on the State.

River water dispute between India and Bangladesh

4604. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware of the revival of campaign by Bangladesh against India, regarding river water dispute by taking up the issue with foreign diplomats in Dhaka ;

(b) if so, what is the reaction of Government thereto ; and

(c) how Government think that Bangladesh's unusual move would affect the settlement of the issue between the two countries ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R. L. BHATIA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Government's reaction to the reference made by the Prime Minister of Bangladesh at United Nations General Assembly is in the statement released by Ministry of External Affairs on October 8, 1993, a copy of which is attached, (*see* below).

Bangladesh's attempts to internationalise the issue of sharing of river waters are not acceptable to India since this is a bilateral issue. Such attempts are not helpful for our bilateral discussions on the subject. Nonetheless, Government of India remain committed to the resolution of the issue through a purposeful dialogue with the Government of Bangladesh.

Statement

SUB : Official spokesman, in response to a query on the Bangladesh P.M.'s reference to the bilateral issue of River Waters in her address to the UNGA.

In answer to a query on the Bangladesh Prime Minister's address to the UN General Assembly, the Official Spokesman said that India noted with considerable regret that the Prime Minister of Bangladesh thought it fit to raise the bilateral issue of River Waters in her statement at UN General Assembly on October 1, 1993. Her references to Farakka Barrage and related issues neither do justice to the documented facts nor refer to the understanding in May '93 between Prime Minister of India and Prime Minister of Bangladesh on the principles and framework of solution. India remains committed to devising "an equitable, long-term and comprehensive arrangement" on water sharing with Bangladesh through bilateral discussions.

When Bangladesh confirms its interest in a meaningful dialogue on these principles and is able to overcome the temptation to play politics with the important River Waters issue, it should be possible to conclude a mutually acceptable Agreement. India continues to be ready for a

constructive dialogue with Bangladesh on the subject.

NEW DELHI
8 October 93.

Discussion with Permanent Under Secretary of British commonwealth

4605. SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether during a meeting between Mr. David Gillmore, Permanent Under Secretary of British Commonwealth and Foreign Office and the Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs, Mr. V. K. Grower on 2nd February, 1994, the former expressed appreciation for steps taken by India for greater transparency on human rights issue including providing increased access to outsiders; and

(b) if so, what other issues were discussed during the meet and the outcome thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHEED) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Other issues discussed during the meeting included exchanges of high-level visits during 1994, Indo-UK economic relations, bilateral cooperation in the areas of terrorism and drug-trafficking, the situation in J&K and Indo-Pak issues. The objective of regular Foreign Office consultations with the UK is to enhance understanding of each other's concerns and give impetus to bilateral relations, which was achieved during the talks.

Chinese Naval activities in the Indian Ocean

4606. Shri G. PRATHAPA REDDY :
DR. SHRIKANT RAMCHANDRA JICHKAR :

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether China is making preparation for setting up Naval bases in the Indian Ocean ;

(b) whether India has noted the promoting Naval activities by China in the Indian Ocean; and

(c) if so, what are the details thereof and Government's reaction thereto ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R. L. BHATIA) : (a) Government is aware of unverified press reports to this effect.

(b) and (c) The Chinese Government, with whom this matter has been discussed, has dismissed these reports as exaggerated. Government keep under constant review all developments having a bearing on the country's security and take appropriate measures to safeguard the national interest.

US President's letter to Indian Government

4607. SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MALAVIYA : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the U.S. President has written any letter to the Indian Government recently ;

(b) if so, what are the contents of the letter and the reaction of Government thereto ;

(c) whether Government have lodged any protest to U.S. Government for its interference in India's internal matters including CIA assistance to ISI in Pakistan against India ; and

(d) if so, what are the details thereof and if not, what are the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R. L. BHATIA) (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) In a letter to Prime Minister, President Clinton stated that he looks forward to meeting PM in person to review the global and bilateral issues with the goal of advancing US-Indian relations and promoting understandig and friendship between our two people. The US President said Deputy Secretary Talbott's visit to India underscores the importance the US placed on the region. President Clinton has also expressed his deepest sympathy and sincere condolences on the death of two Indian soldiers in Somalia last month.

In his response, Prime Minister stated that he looked forward to his conversation